



16th July 2018

RE: Serving of Alcohol in Stadia for UEFA Competition Matches – Changes to Article 36

As part of its social responsibility programme, UEFA has committed to promoting healthy and active lifestyles, and works with its associate partner *European Healthy Stadia Network CIC (Healthy Stadia)* to develop sports stadia as 'health promoting settings'.

We note that after its Executive Committee meeting in Kiev on 24th May, UEFA has amended Article 36 of its Safety and Security Regulations (distribution of alcohol), in favour of: "a policy allowing (not requiring) such sale and distribution [of alcohol], but subject at all times to national and local laws". We also note that this decision has been reached after a "thorough evaluation as to whether UEFA's longstanding policy prohibiting the availability of alcohol at its matches should be maintained or removed".

As an NGO working to develop sports stadia as 'health promoting settings', we are concerned that opinion from the field of public health has not been considered as part of this 'thorough evaluation' process, and have some wider reaching concerns with the proposed relaxation of Article 36.

Whilst we acknowledge that the vast majority of football fans attending UEFA matches choosing to drink alcohol will do so responsibly, it is appropriate to summarise some of the short and long-term consequences of alcohol consumption on health and wellbeing, and suitable counter measures that can be adopted to minimise negative impact of this policy change.

Alcohol Consumption, Health and Football

- **Health impact of alcohol:** The toll of alcohol on individual health and on healthcare systems has been well highlighted. Alcohol sits in the top five causes of death and disability globally, responsible for 5.9% of deaths and 5.1% of disability adjusted life years (DALYs) lost each year (WHO, 2014: Global status report on alcohol and health).
- **European context:** Alcohol intake in the WHO European Region is the *highest in the world*. The pattern of heavy episodic drinking varies largely across Europe, but is of especially concern in Northern and Eastern Europe as it is often linked to accidents and injuries. Alcohol is responsible for 1 in 7 male deaths and 1 in 13 female deaths in the group aged 15–64 years, resulting in approximately 120,000 premature deaths.
- **Overconsumption of alcohol:** There is no guaranteed safe level of alcohol consumption. Regular overconsumption of alcohol is related to premature death and avoidable disease and is a *major avoidable risk factor* for neuropsychiatric disorders (e.g. anxiety), cardiovascular diseases, cirrhosis of the liver and some cancers (breast, bowel, mouth, throat, oesophagus, liver). It is also associated with several infectious diseases and contributes significantly to unintentional and intentional injuries, including pedestrian and car accidents. This last point should be of specific concern in relation to fans exiting stadia post-match, and local populations within the near vicinity of the stadium.
- **Exposure to minors:** Football spectatorship is a family pastime, with many children and young people attending matches. There is now substantial scientific evidence detailing the association between children's alcohol-related behaviours and parents' use of and attitudes toward alcohol (1) (2) , with studies demonstrating that the greater the amount of time spent with alcohol-using parents, the more likely children are to use alcohol (3).

Promotion of Responsible Drinking & Training Recommendations

In line with changes to Article 36, and in light of UEFA matches predominantly being played against clubs from different countries with different alcohol laws and drinking cultures, we advise a number of key 'harm reduction' measures that should be coordinated by UEFA in advance of the 2018-19 season for those countries and clubs affected by this change in policy. These include:

- Stopping sale of alcohol at the end of half-time.
- Agreement on what maximum strength alcohol may be sold at UEFA matches – we suggest restricting this to drinks with alcohol content of no more than 3%.
- Agreement on maximum number of alcoholic drinks to be purchased at UEFA matches per visit to drinks concession – we suggest no more than 2 drinks per person, per visit.
- UEFA led campaign promoting responsible consumption of alcohol at all food and beverage (F&B) concessions selling alcohol, with specific advice on rehydration through water.
- Availability of free, clean drinking water for rehydration upon request at all UEFA matches.
- Up to date training of all F&B serving staff (full-time and part-time) to recognise signs of overconsumption of alcohol and protocol on declining sale of alcohol to intoxicated fans. Additional training on supply of alcohol in line with national age-restrictions, something that varies widely across Europe.
- In-depth training of stewards and security staff on overconsumption of alcohol by fans within the stadium, intervention and ejection protocol, with particular focus on egress flows and dispersal away from the stadium in public areas.
- Stewards should also be aware that some people with disabilities have slurred speech, or have limited mobility that stewards may mistake for someone who is drunk. Stewards and concession staff should therefore receive disability awareness training to ensure they do not jump to conclusions.

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